

**California Historical Records Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
July 26, 2012**

Location: California Historical Society, San Francisco

Members Present: Stacey Aldrich, Peter Blodgett (10:20), Gabriele Carey (10:15), Sue Hodson (10:20), Jim Hofer, Paula Jabloner, Nancy Lenoil, Laren Metzger, Chuck Wilson (11:20), Claude Zachary

Member Participating by Phone: Ilona Koti

Member Absent: Blaine Lamb

Guest: Rebecca Wendt, State Archives

State Coordinator Nancy Lenoil called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Welcome

Nancy welcomed Paula to the board and noted that newly appointed member Blaine Lamb was unable to attend.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Claude and seconded by Jim to approve the minutes of March 1, 2012 and June 11, 2012. The motion passed unanimously.

Election of Vice Chair

Nancy called for a discussion of the election of a Vice Chair for the board. The Vice Chair would act on behalf of the board for a defined period of time when Nancy and Laren were unable to fulfill their responsibilities. Peter volunteered for the position. A motion was made by Jim and seconded by Gabriele to elect Peter as Vice Chair. The motion passed unanimously.

SNAP Grant

Laren offered an update about the SNAP grant, noting that the project is on schedule. The consultants are expected to complete the curriculum for the electronic records workshop in a few weeks. Thanks to Claude, the first workshop will be held at USC on September 13, 2012. Laren indicated that the first electronic records webinar would be offered before the end of the calendar year.

Review of Grant Proposals

City of Ridgecrest

It was agreed that this was a very poorly written and organized proposal that deserved little discussion by the board.

Recommendation: Reject; unanimous vote of the board.

San Diego Air and Space Museum

While it was agreed that the records to be digitized are significant to an understanding of California's aerospace industry, there are a number of problems with the application. It isn't clear whether new metadata is being created during the project or whether existing descriptive information will be utilized. If the former, the application would not adhere to NHPRC guidelines. The plan of work is rather ambitious and user statistics are missing, which would have been helpful. There is an indication that corporate funding is being sought, but no information about how this might relate to federal funding. There is an issue about the privacy of some of the records and concern about the large chunk of money requested for the oversize scanner. There needs to be clarification about what type of digital asset management system (DAMS) will be used. Despite these concerns, the board feels this is a project with merit that is worth doing if corrections are made.

Recommendation: Other (revise and resubmit); unanimous vote of the board

San Jose State University

There are questions about how the budget is put together. Generally, it lacks details. Also, there is an issue about sustainability of the project. Some members argued this is essentially a local responsibility, that is, something the university should be doing anyway. The application is poorly written and does not make a strong enough statement about the significance of the records. Why is only a portion of the collection being digitized?

Recommendation: Other (revise and resubmit); unanimous vote of the board.

The board took a break for lunch at 11:30 and reconvened at 12:30.

Social and Public Art Resource Center

The project archivist has no professional training. There is concern that \$100,000 is being requested to cover salaries of existing staff. There is a need for clarification about the number of slides to be digitized. One section of the application says 80,000 while another notes 30,000. This might be a better proposal for NEH.

Recommendation: Reject; unanimous vote of the board.

Sonoma County Superior Court

There are conflicting numbers given for the Jack London records, which represent a small portion of the records to be digitized. Mike Wilson is noted as a London expert, but is unknown by staff at The Huntington Library, which has the largest collection of London records. It

appears that the plan of work would create an RFP after the vendor is selected; should be the other way around. Is it feasible to digitize 500,000 pages in 18 months? Seems like a heavy workload, although much of it will be digitized from microfilm. Preservation issues are overlooked or lack details; same with the budget. ICR will work okay for forms that are pre-defined and uniform, but OCR will be needed for handwritten documents and pages where data is all over a page. The project staff does not seem to have archival experience.

Recommendation: Reject; unanimous vote of the board.

University of California, Berkeley

This is a significant collection of records. The project staff is well versed in this type of project and the proposal is well organized and written. It seems odd that Archon will be used as a database system, but the descriptive data will not be sent to the Online Archive of California. It would have been nice to have included a budget narrative to provide details.

Recommendation: Fund; unanimous vote of the board.

California State Archives

Nancy, Laren, Stacey, and Rebecca recused themselves from discussion. Peter led the discussion about the application and will prepare the summary of board comments and ratings for NHPRC.

Board comments quickly reflected a consensus among the members that the CSA possesses a well-trained and highly-experienced staff supported by a sound infrastructure for dealing with electronic records. All members agreed that the central issues of managing electronic records, especially in the realm of public records, represent a critical next stage in preparing archives to master the challenge of electronic information. Various board members, however, also expressed many serious concerns about the extremely ambitious nature of this particular project, especially in relying upon collaboration among three separate institutions with potentially very different institutional cultures. Other board comments observed that various elements of the application needed elaboration (such as the rationale for the choice of the software system and the vendor) or clarification (such as the definitions of various concepts such as “trustworthy digital repository” and the structure of the project’s work flows). The substantial expense for implementing such an ambitious “proof of concept” test worried board members since the coordination of so many elements would present many possible points at which the project could break down. While impressed by the caliber of staff being deployed to address this substantial project, board members felt that the project scope could overwhelm even so able a staff. The eventual board consensus endorsed a recommendation that a project less ambitious in scale, focusing perhaps upon a single agency, would be a more prudent approach in attempting to develop a prototype that could have very widespread applicability.

Recommendation: Other (revise and resubmit); unanimous vote of the board

NHPRC Funding

Nancy noted that NHPRC is once again fighting for its budget life. The House of Representatives has proposed 2.5 million for the next fiscal year while the Senate has approved 5 million.

Reports from State Agencies

State Archives

Nancy referred the members to her report. She noted that a recent MOU between the state and the union called for an end to all student assistants by September 1, 2012.

State Parks

Nancy summarized a recent visit she made to McClellan Park where State Parks has embarked on a project to build out an existing structure that would serve as a collections storage facility. Despite dire predictions, few park facilities are being closed presently.

State Library

Stacey noted that the move to the Sutro Library's new facility at San Francisco State University has been completed. Renovation work on the Library and Courts buildings is moving forward with a project completion in December 2013. The Library's digitization lab is available to do outside work. Digitization of the *Wasp* newspaper is continuing.

Reports from Other Organizations

Council of State Archivists

Nancy indicated that the SERI project is moving ahead. Vicky Walch is retiring as long-time Executive Director. Nancy will serve as tri-chair of the program committee for the 2013 SAA/CoSA joint meeting.

Society of California Archivists

Sue said that SCA's annual meeting in Ventura attracted over 200 attendees. Lisa Miller of the Hoover Institute is now the President. The society is working on a speaker's bureau and several new brochures. A session on SAA-regional cooperation will involve SCA at the upcoming SAA annual meeting in San Diego. The 2013 annual meeting will be held in Berkeley.

California Council for the Promotion of History

Chuck indicated that CCPH will hold its 2012 annual meeting in October in Woodland. He noted that he has been unable to generate much interest from the membership for participation in CHRAP.

Huntington Library

Sue indicated that the Huntington Library is working on a new exhibition hall that will employ widespread use of technology. Peter noted that the library is creating a new exhibit focusing on Junipero Serra to celebrate the 300th anniversary of Serra's birth.

Records Management

Ilena noted that ARMA's annual meeting will be held in Chicago this year.

Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held in Sacramento at the Secretary of State's Office on November 14th or 15th.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Chuck and seconded by Peter to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Nancy adjourned the meeting at 2:45 p.m.